

Hyper-Calvinism

By
Peter S. Ruckman

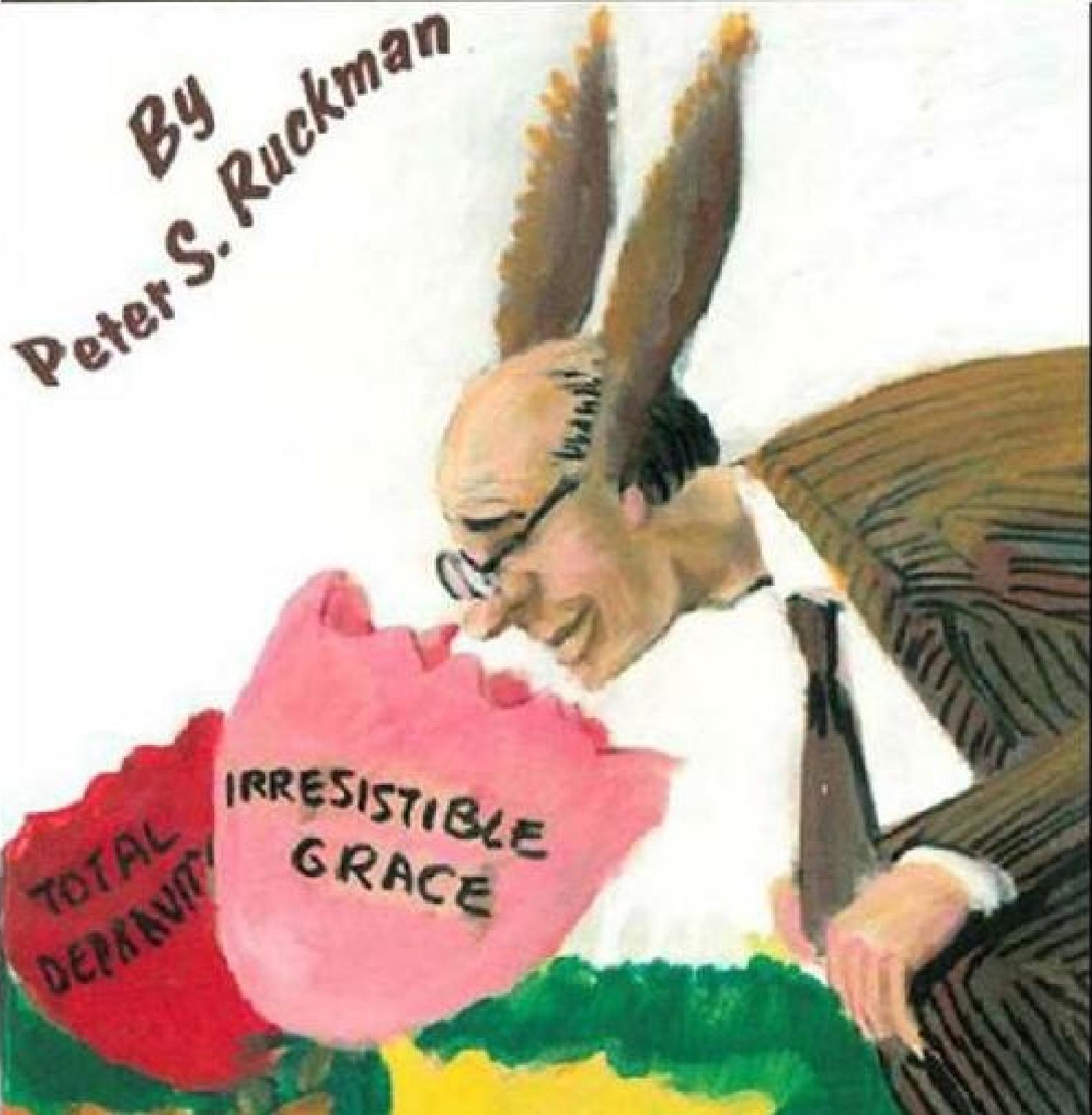


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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The Scripture quotations found herein are from the text of the Authorized *King James* Version of the Bible. Any deviations therefrom are not intentional.

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Introduction

Hyper-Calvinism is an overemphasis on the doctrines taught by John Calvin, the Swiss Protestant reformer. The main points of Calvinism are usually designated by the word TULIP. Of these five doctrines, four of them are unscriptural and, therefore, classify "Calvinism" as a heresy.

Now, let us make ourselves clear at the beginning. We believe that John Calvin was a Christian. When we talk about John Calvin we are talking about a Protestant reformer who at least had enough sense and enough faith in the word of God to see that a man, when he is born again, could not be unborn again. We will talk about this more when we get to the fifth point of Calvinism called "perseverance of the saints," or sometimes called "predestination." In either case, Calvin was smart enough to see that man was not saved by works or kept saved by works. We'll grant him this much and beyond this we will grant him very, very little indeed. A man who would burn a man at the stake for disagreeing with him doctrinally is not a man to be emulated or followed or admired. We may admire John Calvin for certain things, but we certainly cannot admire him for his attitude toward what the Bible says about these matters. Any man who would set up a theocracy in Geneva and try to put upon the body of Christ the Old Testament laws found in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, while talking about being "saved by grace," is not a man to be followed anywhere by anybody who knows the word of God.

Now, we will grant you that coming out of the Dark Ages before the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, there was a great deal that was commendable in the Reformers because, after all, they were coming out of a very dark period and a very long period of Bible ignorance. This is not an alibi for the ignorance to continue. The atrocious emphasis placed upon Calvinism by many of the Puritans led them to burn people at the stake and today has led such people as Mauro and Ross and Arthur W. Pink and Berkhof and Dabney and Kuiper and Hodge and the systematic theologians of reformed theology, namely Machen and Warfield, to teach that God is all through with the Jews, which He is not; that there will be no Rapture before the Tribulation, which there will be; that no personal Antichrist will reign on this earth three and one-half years, which he will; and that there will be no millennial reign of Christ on this earth before the White Throne Judgment, which there will. In plainer words, when we talk about the five points of Calvinism, we should always make it very clear to the student that, although John Calvin did teach these things, he taught a great deal more

besides this that also was false. For example, a man says, "Are you a Calvinist?" I answer, "Not if I can help it." I mean anybody who knew John Calvin and what he taught would certainly never talk about being a "Calvinist."

We can talk about being a Calvinist on one point out of five. That is, we can go along with John Calvin on twenty percent of what he believed. I would not say that following a man for twenty percent of what he believed would make him a "Calvinist." That is a little overstatement. We call it an "oversimplification." These people that divide people off into Arminians and Calvinists forget that the argument between Jacob Arminius and John Calvin had to do with the operation of free will in getting saved and the main disagreement was after they were saved could the man "unbelieve" and be lost again. Now, Calvin had this point right, but just because Calvin happened to hit it right one time out of five would certainly make him no example for a Bible believer to follow. When I got my Master's Degree they asked me at the inquest, "Are you an Arminian or a Calvinist?" I answered, "I am an Arminian until I get to Calvary and after that I am a Calvinist." They didn't like that too well.

We would also like to make clear that we are not saying that God didn't use Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Spurgeon was a very excellent preacher and soul winner, but the souls he won to Christ were not won through the five points of Calvinism. We're not saying that Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a heretic because he believed these things. Many people who believe the doctrines of Calvinism only have a head belief in these things. The doctrines of Calvinism were accepted by the French Huguenots with good effect on their personal lives. The doctrines of Calvinism were accepted by the Puritans with some good and some bad effects, and the doctrines were accepted by the Scotch Presbyterians with some good and some bad effects.

We are talking here about the false teaching of John Calvin on total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement and the so-called "irresistible grace." Where a preacher or teacher puts an emphasis on these points, we call this "hyper-Calvinism." Somebody said, "Well, it's just Calvinism." No, this depends upon the emphasis. George Whitefield was a moderate Calvinist and George Whitefield said moderate Calvinism is the best teaching for evangelism. Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a very moderate Calvinist, and if you will read The Metropolitan Pulpit (the sermons he preached through the years), you will find that less than one out of twenty deals with the doctrine of election or the doctrine of predestination. In plainer words, when we say "hyper-Calvinism," we are talking about an overemphasis on something that Calvin taught; exactly as when

we say "hyper-Dispensationalist" we mean an overemphasis on dispensations. We are not saying that everything a Dispensationalist says is false. Anybody knows there are several dispensations in the word of God and this is apparent to the most naive of Bible students. For example, any unsaved man recognizes an Old Testament and a New Testament. So, when we talk about "hyper-Calvinism" we are not talking about the extending of Calvin's doctrines to a place beyond which he taught, but we are merely talking about an overemphasis on what he taught. In this case, four of the things he taught were simply not so. Four of the five points of Calvinism are unscriptural, non-Biblical, philosophical nonsense. And we will talk about these in this lesson.

Let me again make myself very clear. It is true that many people believed this and taught this who were saved, in spite of their lack of common sense and in spite of their lack of serious Bible studies. But, when we talk about these matters, we are talking about the damage done to the body of Christ by such writings as The Sovereignty of God by Arthur W. Pink (the expression is not found anywhere in the word of God), such writings as Systematic Theology by Machen, Warfield and Berkhof, such works as The Institutes of Calvin that deal with total depravity, and such works as the nonsense propagated in the 1940s and 1950s by Rolffe Barnard and L. R. Shelton out of New Orleans which polluted a whole stream of Christians for two, three and four decades.

I. Total Depravity

The first of these is called total depravity. The doctrine of total depravity is based on the idea that since the unsaved man is "dead in trespasses and sins," he can do nothing to receive Christ. Now, let me make myself clear. I have dealt with scores and scores of Calvinists and hyper-Calvinists in every kind of situation, and nowhere in this file are we going to misrepresent their position. All these people have persecution complexes. When you begin to talk about these matters they say, "Oh, no, we don't believe that. We really believe this." And, after you talk to them thirty minutes you find that they believe exactly what you said they believed to start with. For example, any born- again, Bible-believing Christian knows that the unsaved man can do nothing spiritually good that God will accept for salvation. Now, anybody knows this. But, to say that because of this the unsaved man cannot do what God told him to do to obtain salvation is a horse of another color.

It's a pale horse, and death and hell follow it.

The teaching of total depravity is what we call non- Biblical, unscriptural heresy. When a man says "total depravity," he is trying to tell you that depravity extends to acts of the will. Furthermore, he is trying to tell you that since the sinner is dead in trespasses and sins (which he is, Eph. 2:1-4) that he cannot receive Jesus Christ even though God commands him to receive Jesus Christ. In one of John's epistles he said the commandment was that we "believe on His son, Jesus Christ." Now, this at the very outset puts Calvin and the Calvinistic system in rough shape. Here God has commanded men to do something that they are unable to do, according to Calvin, and the question arises, "Would God do this?" The standard alibi offered by Berkhof, Gill, Dabney, Hodge and the Puritans is, "Well, God commanded men to keep the commandments and they couldn't keep the commandments." Yes, but then you were told that the commandments were a schoolmaster to lead you to Christ. What these men are trying to tell us (regardless of what they say they're trying to tell us) is that God gave the commandments, knowing that we could not keep them, so that they could lead us to the realization that we were dead in trespasses and sins and depraved and without hope and could not keep the law (because the carnal mind is enmity against God, neither can he keep the commandments). This would show us our need of Christ, and so when we saw our need of Christ we still couldn't receive Him, even though God commanded us to do it. Of course, the Calvinist will stumble all over himself and say, "No, that isn't what we teach," and then run off

to some verse we haven't discussed yet. But since we are going to discuss all the verses in this file, there isn't much point in getting in a hurry, is there?

Now, the hyper-Calvinist, like the hyper-Dispensationalist and the Jehovah's Witness and the Church of Christ, have what we call a circular pattern of reasoning; it means the inability to face a text and stay with it. For example, the verse used to prove total depravity is Ephesians 2:1-4 and in particular verse 1, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." There is no doubt about what they are trying to say. They are trying to say that since the man is dead spiritually, he cannot receive Jesus Christ of his own free act of will or choice. This is not misrepresenting the position. Anybody who has studied Calvinistic theology knows perfectly well that the format (the order of salvation) is, first of all, God quickens the sinner regardless of his will and then implants the new seed of the new birth within him; secondly, the man gets under conviction and repents and "believes on Christ." Somebody said, "Oh, we don't believe that." Well, you're just dishonest or stupid or both. If you are a hyper-Calvinist that is exactly what you believe. And if you don't believe that, you don't know what a hyper-Calvinist believes and you haven't studied John Calvin. That is what Calvin and Berkhof and Dabney and Gill and Hodge and Pink taught.

Now, the teaching that depravity extends to the will and, therefore, is "total" is what we call a Bible-rejecting, unscriptural, Satanic heresy. The term "freewill" is a Bible term. The expression "sovereignty of God" is not a Bible term. The word "freewill" is found in Ezra 7:13. The expression "the sovereignty of God" and "irresistible grace" will be found nowhere in the word of God. The expression "freewill" is found in Ezra 7:16. The Bible knows nothing about sovereign grace at all. The expression occurs nowhere. We find offerings "willingly offered" and offered "freely" in Exodus 35:5, Exodus 35:21 and Exodus 35:29. Now, do you know what is so shocking about the passages I just cited from the Old Testament? None of the people in them were born again. And none of the people we "in Christ" or "chosen in Christ," and not a single one of them was quickened by the Holy Spirit. This is why we say total depravity is a non-Biblical heresy.

John Calvin was a good Bible student for the day and age in which he lived, but he certainly was not a deep student of the scripture or a believing student of all the scripture, as you will quickly gather if you study his work. Any man who would burn a man at the stake for disagreeing with him about the Trinity could hardly be classified as a serious Bible student. John Calvin had Servetus burned

at the stake for disagreeing with him about the doctrine of the Trinity. This is not the mark of a mature Christian or a Bible-believing Christian. I never met a Christian in my life who believed all the Bible that would think of doing such a thing. But John Calvin would and did.

Now, here is the thing: A man who tells you that a person has to be "quickened" by the Holy Spirit before he can willingly do something of his own free will to please God is lying. Nobody in the Old Testament until the time of Christ had been born again. They were all "dealt in trespasses and sins." They were all joined to the flesh; none of them had received spiritual circumcision (Col. 2). Their soul was stuck to the body and spoken of as the same, as you know from studying Jehovah's Witness literature. Yet they all were responsible for pleasing God and acting of their own free will, and they had a free will with which they acted and it is said to be a free will. Therefore, the doctrine of total depravity is not to be countenanced by the serious student of the word of God. We may grant that man's nature is depraved. We may grant that there is nothing good in man. We may grant that. We may grant that a man is dead spiritually and that apart from the new birth he cannot be born again, regenerated and placed in the body of Christ and that God has to do the action of the new birth. But to say that because this is true that man has no free will is nonscriptural blasphemy contrary to the word of God, no matter who professes to believe it. After all, some of the greatest Christians who ever lived were so screwed up in their doctrine that you couldn't get them unplugged with a corkscrew.

Ephesians 2:1-4 is talking about an operation that didn't take place until after the resurrection, and it only had to do with born again believers in this day and age. And before any of these people could be "quickened," as the scriptures say, they had to do something. Did you notice that? John 1:12-13, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The new birth is conditioned upon you receiving Jesus Christ. There is not a case in the history of the universe where any man was ever "born again" until he received Jesus Christ, and to say that total depravity extends to acts of the will is nonsense.

The Bible says in John 3:36 about these matters, "He that believeth on the Son has everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth (present tense) on him." Now, my good friend, if you were one of the elect and predestinated to be saved, how do you account for the fact that the wrath of God abode upon you constantly before you believed? Is that

any way to treat "the elect"? And let me ask you this. What is the wrath of God doing abiding on you when you can't do anything about it? Does that sound like the Lord? Do you think the Lord would pour out His wrath on an unsaved man when the unsaved man could do nothing about his condition? That is what Calvin thought and taught and believed. And that is what Barnard and L. R. Shelton thought and believed and that is what you will find in that hardshell Baptist paper put out in Ashland, Kentucky, called The Baptist Examiner. That is the teaching.

Continuing on total depravity, in Isaiah 45:19 this matter is debunked: "I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain: I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." In Luke 17:1 you are told that even though offences have to come (there is your sovereignty and predestination!), "woe unto him, through whom they come," putting the responsibility clearly in your lap. The question that Calvin could never face and discuss and the question which no hyper-Calvinist can ever face and discuss is how an unsaved man can be responsible for something that he is unable to do and be held accountable for something he could not have done if he had tried. The god of Calvin is an unjust god in this respect. When I say that, of course, I mean the theological god of Calvin. I would say that Calvin was saved, but his theological god wasn't playing with a full deck.

You read in Acts 2:23, "Him," (Christ) "being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." He puts the responsibility right on them. In Acts 4 He is very clear about it. He says in Acts 4:10, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom YE crucified...." Acts 3:14-15, "But ye...killed the Prince of life...." Stephen, in Acts 7:52, called these people murderers. They are responsible. Now, the question comes up that if the man is dead in trespasses and sins and is not responsible for receiving Christ, how can he be responsible for rejecting Christ? The answer is pure, unadulterated "baloney." Not once in their lifetime did Calvin or any of the Puritans ever figure it out. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. God will not lay upon a man more than is right for him. Didn't you read in Romans where he is talking about rewarding Gentiles for seeking the Lord even though they were dead in trespasses and sin? Did you notice that thing in Romans 1 and 2? Did you notice that? Did you notice in Romans 2:7-10 that there is no mention of the elect at all and that the

entire passage had to do with unsaved Jews and Gentiles who were either seeking God or else doing wrong? There wasn't anybody "elect" in the whole chapter. Read it--Romans 2. And they are responsible for their deeds and their motives as unsaved sinners dead in trespasses and sins, Jew or Gentile. Total depravity is a non-scriptural heresy.

2. Unconditional Election

The next non-scriptural heresy taught by John Calvin is called "unconditional election." This is based on Ephesians 1:4, and, as we said before, even though the Puritans were good, godly, dedicated, consecrated, separated men, they were not very profound Bible students and they couldn't handle the verse. When we say this we want to make ourselves clear. Many people can be godly, dedicated, separated, doubly-sanctified, double-separated people like the Pharisees and yet know nothing about the word of God. In Ephesians 1:4 Calvin read, "According as he (God) hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world..." Verse 5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Now, this was supposed to be unconditional election, the idea that it was according to the arbitrary good will of God which He purposed in Himself in Ephesians 1:9. But as we said before, unconditional election is rather stupid and rather wicked in view of the fact that 1 Peter 1:1 and 2 says that your election is conditioned. Why contradict the scripture and make a liar out of God when God has clearly spoken about these matters? Election is conditioned on foreknowledge by the clear statement of 1 Peter 1:2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," and this election has nothing to do with eternity. This election was "through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." As predestination is conditioned on foreknowledge (Rom. 8:29), so is election conditioned on foreknowledge.

The trouble Calvin had was with the word "chosen" and the peculiar way that Ephesians 1:4 is worked. And, of course, Gilpin and Ross and the rest of them never did get the thing straight. When these Bible-rejecting Christians read Ephesians 1:4, they read "according as God chose us when we were in Christ before the foundation of the world." That is not what the verse says. The verse says, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world..." God did His electing or choosing before the foundation of the world, but notice where His choice was. It was "in Christ."

Calvin had this remarkable boo-boo in his theology which he never got completely straightened out. He actually thought that before Genesis 1:1 you were in Christ. Then when Adam showed up you fell out of Christ and got back in Christ when you were "quickened" (Eph. 2:1-4). Why he figured that you couldn't then fall back out of Christ again is beyond finding out. But he did have one point of Calvinism right, the perseverance of the saints--predestination to be

conformed to God's image. He had that part right, but certainly not unconditional election. There is not a case in the Bible where God elected anybody until they did something He told them to do. Not a case. Somebody said, "Well, those things were back there in eternity." No, they were not. God made His choice in eternity, but His choice was placed in time. You see, you weren't "in Christ" until you trusted Christ. And when God chose He chose for election the people in Christ. You were not in Christ before Genesis 1:1.

Somebody said, "What about that thing over in Romans 9:11 where he says, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth"?" You had better look at that context again. That context wasn't Genesis 1:1. That was at the time Rebecca conceived (Rom. 9:10) and it was based on foreknowledge (Rom. 9:12). When Calvin was faced with these matters he hit upon a capital way to get out of the mess, but then he got into another mess that he never could explain. He figured that if Esau and Jacob were subjects and objects of election before they were born and since the saved were elected because they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world that before a baby is born the baby is elect or non-elect. This led to a very embarrassing question asked of him by Jacob Arminius. The question was, "Since only God knows who the elect are, what are you going to do about all the babies that die? Are they all elect babies?" And the very embarrassing answer given by Calvin and his followers was, "Well, we can hope for the best." But this didn't solve any problem because if adoption and election are sure, as Berkhof says, then the decree for reprobation is as eternal as the decree for salvation. Some babies go to hell in Calvin's system. You say, "We don't believe that." Then you don't believe in the five points of Calvinism. In the five points of Calvinism a man is elected before he is born, according to Romans 9:11; the election is unconditional. It is true that Calvin was not a very conscientious student of scripture. If he had been he would have noticed in the passages in Romans 5:13 and Romans 4:15 that any child, before he is old enough to know good and evil (Deut. 1:39), is "elect" as far as salvation is concerned and his sins are not charged to him. But, as we said before, Calvin was a very shallow student of the word of God. He was a very deep philosophical student and a very deep theological student, but to say that simply because a man has had twenty-two years of education and has mastered Hebrew and Greek and theology that he is an intelligent Bible student is to misread the problem and give a false answer. Some of the biggest blockheads, Biblically, who ever lived in this world are

theological and philosophical students.

"Unconditional election" was supposed to be a matter that was based on nothing and yet you are told that it is conditioned on foreknowledge. Some of you say, "What about that 'chosen' there?" Well, that thing won't work in the passage because you certainly were not in Christ before the foundation of the world. You were only in Christ when you received Jesus Christ as your Saviour and that is the time that you were chosen to be adopted. You see, Calvin never could get the difference between Old Testament salvation and New Testament salvation. He always had enough Roman Catholic in him to be a Judaizer and he never could get it through his head that when the Bible talked about "predestinated to be conformed to the image" that that was not just salvation. Predestinated to be conformed to God's image is a privilege that only saints in this age have. Moses and Elijah still have their own images. That is why we say that Calvin was not a very deep student of the Bible. Neither was Charles Haddon Spurgeon. We're not going to deny that when Charles Haddon Spurgeon preached salvation through the shed blood of Jesus Christ that he got souls saved, but then so did John Wesley. Wesley got more of them saved than Spurgeon did. And Wesley wasn't even sound on the perseverance of the saints. So, let's keep our discussion on a Biblical basis.

Speaking of unconditional election, these people have forgotten (if they ever knew) that the choosing of God not only took place in eternity, but the choosing was based on foreknowledge and the object chosen had to be in Christ. You were not in Christ until you received Him as your Saviour. And when you received Him as your Saviour, the Holy Spirit put you in Christ and put Christ in you. When you received Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit predestinated you (1) to the adoption of sons, (2) to be conformed to Christ's image, (3) according to God's good pleasure and that had nothing to do with your salvation at all. Your salvation had to do with you receiving Jesus Christ. When Noah believed God, he was not "predestinated to be conformed" to God's image or Christ's image. He was not put "into Christ." And he was not adopted as a son of God. So, Calvin, as we said, was a very shallow Bible student. He had this wild idea that since he found one truth in the New Testament that it applied everywhere indiscriminately to everybody he wished to put it down upon; and, of course, it doesn't. The second teaching of John Calvin, "unconditional election," is non-scriptural nonsense.

3. Limited Atonement

The third point of TULIP is called limited atonement and is based on John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," and on the fact that in Ephesians 5:25 we read that Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. Of all the blasphemous things taught by John Calvin, this was perhaps the worst. This was the obscene blasphemy that Jesus Christ only died for the elect and that no blood was shed for anybody else except the people whom God had chosen--the elect. Strangely enough, Calvin would allow that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and Moses were saved by the shed blood of Christ, and yet, it never occurred to Calvin that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David and Moses were never in Christ and were not elected in Christ and were not chosen in Christ and were not "predestinated to be conformed to His image." Calvin had his Bible kind of screwed up. Limited atonement was the teaching that Christ died only for the elect. And, of course, if there is anything the Bible makes clear it makes clear that this is just non-scriptural foolishness. In the first place, Calvin taught that only the elect could repent. Yet, low and behold, we are told in the gospels that Tyre and Sidon would have repented if they had had the opportunity that Capernaum had. If they could have repented then they were elect because only the elect can repent. But Sodom and Gomorrah and Tyre and Sidon are said to be cast down to hell. If they are in hell they couldn't have repented according to limited atonement and irresistible grace. But Christ said they would have. So we see how this nonsense proceeds.

The limited atonement that was taken out of John 10:11 was done by the combobling or misappropriation of verses where the heretic interprets a complete verse or statement in the light of an incomplete verse or statement, which, of course, is irrational. A complete statement is never to be interpreted in the light of an incomplete statement anywhere in or out of court, in or out of the Bible, or in or out of common sense. The complete statement is found in 1 Timothy 2:6, "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." You cannot interpret 1 Timothy 2:6 by John 10:11. First Timothy 2:6 says that Christ "gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." When a heretic like Roth Barnard or L. R. Shelton or Arthur W. Pink is confronted with this verse, he will tell you that the "all" in the passage means all of the elect. (For this reason Lorenzo Dowell often referred to the Calvinists as "whole part men." That is, where the scriptures said "all" or "whole," they said "part.") You will notice the context of 1 Timothy 2 has nothing to do with the elect. Verse 2,

"...For all that are in authority"--not the elect. Verse 4, "Who will have all men to be saved"--not the elect. Verse 6, "Who gave himself a ransom for all"--not the elect--"to be testified in due time."

So, Calvinists, as hyper-Dispensationalists and Church of Christ elders, seem to have a terrible time with what we call "context." They seem to be Roman Catholic in their misuse of texts to prove things that are not so. Notice in 1 Timothy 2:4 that it says, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." There was not one word there at all about all the elect. By the same token in John 3:16 it says, "the world." Now, in dealing with these, Calvin, as most heretics, would say "the world" there meant "the elect of the Gentiles" and then he would run to 1 John for a while to try to prove something or other. But it won't come through. Christ said in John 17 that He prayed not for the world. Well, He's praying for the elect, isn't He? Don't you read that Jesus Christ ever liveth to make intercession for those that come unto God by Him? Well, He's not praying for the world in John 17. How say ye then that the "world" in John 17 are the Gentile elect? This shows the stupid exegesis that blundering fools get into sometimes in an effort to avoid the will of God. Those of us who have had many, many years dealing with the Calvinists and hyper-Calvinists know that many of these men, instead of going out after souls, and being about the Father's business, spent their time locked up in rooms reading books and trying to get an alibi not to do what God told them to do; or instead of being patient and plowing and planting and sowing, they wanted to reap so badly that when they couldn't reap they suddenly decided that all their members were lost and spent the rest of the time trying to re-save their members. This is the characteristic of the hyper-Calvinist and we will talk about this more later when we talk about the practical manifestation of this heresy. Nothing can kill a church any quicker or any deader than the five points of Calvinism. It will kill your church deader than a hammer.

Limited atonement is an ancient blasphemy. in 1 Peter 2:1 we are told that Christ shed His blood for unsaved false teachers and false prophets. To teach, therefore, that Christ shed His blood only for the elect is to make a liar out of God and to insult the Holy Spirit who wrote the word of God. Second Peter 2:1 says that Christ's blood bought unsaved false teachers and false prophets--hardly the elect. "Limited atonement," therefore, is what Charles Wesley called it, "Oh, horrible decree, worthy of the place from whence it came. Forgive their hellish blasphemy that charge it to the Lamb." In Hebrews 10:29 we are told that a man can go to hell after being sanctified by the blood of the covenant. If you think

that refers to a Christian who is elect and then loses it, you are not a Calvinist and, therefore, it has to be a man who is not saved and yet he is sanctified by the blood. Explain how an unsaved man can be sanctified by the blood when the blood was only shed for the limited elect. Calvin, Berkhof, Dabney, Hodge, and Gill and the rest of them never could explain it any more than a Campbellite could explain you receiving the blood of Christ through the city water system.

First Timothy 2:4, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth," teaches unlimited atonement. Second Peter 3:9, "...Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," teaches unlimited atonement. And when the hyper-Calvinists are faced with these clear verses they say, "Well, the Lord is longsuffering to usward, meaning the elect, not willing that any would perish but that all should come to repentance," which is the height of absurdity and the depth of nonsense. Whoever heard of God being longsuffering to the elect, not willing that any of the elect should perish? Why, if they were elect in Calvin's sense they couldn't perish. Limited atonement is nonsense. In 2 Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men could slackness; but is longsuffering to usward...." Who? Men. Look at the context. Verse 9, "...as some men count slackness...." Why, both the saved and unsaved are found in the passage. Look at the unsaved in verse 3 and verse 5. Look at the saved people in verse 11 and look at verse 17 at the saved and lost people. "...Not willing that any should perish...." Any of the elect? The elect couldn't perish if they tried in Calvin's system. We're dealing with nonsense. Depraved nonsense.

4. Irresistible Grace

The fourth part of Calvin's system is called irresistible grace, the fourth letter of the word TULIP. This is supposedly taught by Acts 13:48, "...And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," and other passages where the Holy Spirit comes upon a man and overthrows him against his will and grants him the new birth without his participating in yielding or being in subjection or being responsive to the Holy Spirit. Now, those of us who are saved are not dumb enough to think the Holy Spirit doesn't have to deal with a man in this age. We know that. We know the Holy Spirit has to convict a man. We know the Holy Spirit is the instrument of the new birth, but to say that the man is an irresponsible agent who cannot act is non-scriptural foolishness and not to be counted by the serious student of scripture regardless of his educational or spiritual qualifications. Now, the verse that John Calvin and The Baptist Examiner pulled out to prove this goofball belief was Acts 13:48, and when these silly people found the verse they read, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Strangely enough, when Calvin got hold of this verse (the Trinitarian Bible Society also made the same error) he got some peculiar idea that all the people who were saved in this age were ordained to eternal life before the foundation of the world and then in due time they believed. This was done by taking this verse and running it back to Ephesians 1:4. You will notice that when you deal with a hyper-Calvinist his mind runs in this circular pattern: Ephesians 2:1-4, Ephesians 1:4, John 10:11, Acts 13:48, Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 5, Ephesians 2, Ephesians 1, John 10, Acts 13. As I said before, John Calvin, although he was a precious shining light for his day, was not a very advanced student of the word of God nor a particularly intelligent man where it came to the word of God. He was a philosophical theologian and a political administrator, or, as one man said, "The Protestant pope of a pope-hating people." You see, John Calvin never compared scripture with scripture once he tried to prove his point. He would go to philosophy and theology to prove his point. How he never discovered that these Gentiles in Acts 13:48 are mentioned in Romans 2:8-10 is past finding out.

If John Calvin had studied his Bible, and, of course, he didn't any more than Arthur W. Pink or Tolley or Toss, he would have known that every Gentile who by "patient continuance in well doing" sought for "glory and honour and immortality" (Rom. 2:7) God ordained to eternal life (Rom. 2:7). And when Paul

begins his ministry here to the Gentiles, he is dealing with people, many of whom have been seeking for glory, honor and immortality. Those are the ones whom God "ordained" to eternal life, and the only way they can get it is to believe. So, the ones whom God has ordained to eternal life according to their works (Rom. 2:7) believe on Christ and are saved by grace through faith.

This, of course, runs entirely contrary to Calvin's system. Calvin thought that since there were no works and since the "arbitrary good pleasure of God" chose the elect without any works that he simply could ignore Romans 2:7. But you cannot ignore Romans 2:7, for the matchmate to Romans 2:7 is Acts 13:48, and those who were "ordained to eternal life" are ordained to eternal life on the basis of works following their conscience, exactly as you find Cornelius in Acts 10. Acts 10 was a passage that Calvin never could figure out. In Acts 10 there was a man who was trying to get to heaven by works. He was not born again or unconditionally elected by irresistible grace or anything. The man was seeking glory and immortality like in Romans 2, following his conscience, and his prayers came up as a memorial before God (Acts 10:4); and on the basis of his sincere desire to please God, he was given a chance to receive Christ and he believed on Jesus Christ in Acts 10:43 and 44. Somebody said, "Well, he was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world." Why, he was not in Christ until he received Christ. Do you know what the condition of a so-called "elect" in Calvin's system was before they got in Christ, before they received Christ? Did you ever read the rest of Ephesians? Ephesians 2:12? The unsaved Gentile was not one of the elect and he wasn't in Christ. He was dead. He was in trespasses and sin. He was alone in the world, without hope and without God, and God didn't even know him (Gal. 4:9), "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God...." You were a blank before you received Jesus Christ.

"Irresistible grace" is the simple teaching that God overpowers the sinner and saves him against his will. If you have read Acts 7 you know that is nonsense. Stephen said, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." The Christian who is saved can grieve the Spirit, quench the Spirit and lie to the Spirit. Why would anybody think that an unsaved man didn't have the power to resist the Spirit of God when even a saved man resists the Spirit of God when the Holy Spirit dwells in him? When we speak of "irresistible grace" we are speaking about irreligious claptrap. There is not a case in the Bible where anybody was saved irresistibly against their will. When Eliezer, a type of the Holy Spirit, went to see Rebecca, a type of the Bride of Christ, they said, "Wilt thou go with this man?" And she said, "I will

go." Nobody knocked her down and dragged her out there against her will. In Matthew 23:37 Jesus said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" There is the intention. Do you know what happened to Jerusalem? The miracles, acts, signs and wonders of the apostles ceased in it and there wasn't another miracle done in it after Acts 7 and the people down there were starving in a famine in Acts 11 and had to have relief sent to them. The city is torn down in 70 A.D. and 500 Jews were crucified outside the city. Somebody said, "Well, this sovereign grace of God, the sovereign will of God, God's sovereign...." Ah, baloney! Christ said, "...How often would I have gathered...and ye would not!" The sovereign will of God in Matthew 23:37 was not for Jerusalem to reject Christ. It was for Jerusalem to receive Christ and they overthrow the sovereign will of God. How was that?

"...How often would I have gathered...." That is the Lord Jesus Christ speaking, brother! You watch out for your blasphemous, smart aleck mouth! That is the Lord Jesus Christ who said, "...How often would I have gathered...and ye would not!" Do you think He is lying?

So, when we talk about the "sovereign will" and the "sovereign grace" of God in Calvinistic literature, many times we are talking about horseradish. The Lord was willing to save them. They were not willing to be saved, according to Him; not according to what you think or what Calvin thought or some theological scheme that you cooked up over 1 Corinthians 1 and John 10 to explain something you couldn't understand.

Tell me something. How come the people in the Old Testament got saved when none of them were regenerated by irresistible grace? Somebody said, "Well, the Holy Spirit comes upon a fellow and overpowers him and quickens him." He didn't come to Noah. Was Noah saved? He didn't come to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Enoch, Joseph, Moses and David. Were they saved? He didn't come to Hezekiah or Asa. Were they saved? What do you mean "irresistible grace"? There was no irresistible grace that overthrew Noah or Moses or David or Isaac or Jacob. They were not in Christ, were not chosen in Christ, were not regenerated, were not spiritually circumcised, were not born again, were not conformed to the image of Christ and were not adopted as sons. They were saved by an act of their own free will while they were dead in trespasses and sin. Do you realize that God Almighty held David accountable for his sins although he was "dead in trespasses and sins" all of his life? God held Saul accountable

and Abimelech accountable and Asa and Hezekiah and Manasseh and Jeroboam and Rehoboam and Ahab and Jezebel and Elijah and Elisha accountable when they were not born again and never experienced the new birth a day in their life. You see, Calvin was not a deep Bible student. He was what you call a "biblical heretic." Now, it is true that he believed in the fundamentals like every pope. It is true that he believed in eternal security like any Baptist. But when we talk about the five points of Calvinism we are talking about nonsense in four out of the five. Irresistible grace is an unknown teaching in the word of God. It is grace that can teach a man's heart to fear and grace his fears relieve. It is the grace of God that allows a man to receive Christ. We'll grant that. But, it is also the grace of God that lets a man go on and live like the devil for years without getting right. We talk about grace-anybody experiences "grace." The devil has had 7,000 years or more of grace, but he is not one of the elect. And he resisted what grace he had. So, when we talk about irresistible grace we are talking about nothing. There isn't any such thing. The term "irresistible grace" is a nonscriptural, theological term and the term "sovereign grace" is a lie against God. The term "sovereign grace" is the cliche used by these dead orthodox philosophers to hint at the fact that God will give saving grace to some that He doesn't give to others. This is sometimes called common grace and special grace.

Now, about this irresistible grace, do you know what Paul said? Paul said, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some," 1 Corinthians 9:22. Now, no matter what you believe about the Holy Spirit, you have to admit that is very strange language for somebody who believes that the Holy Spirit is the only person at work convicting sinners and getting them saved. If that is true, like Calvin said, then Paul took the glory from God and the Lord should have dropped him on the spot. After all, He said, "My glory will I not give to another" (Isa. 42:8). Paul said, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." And they were saved against their will and born again without their permission? You say, "We don't really teach that." Of course you do. You just haven't understood or applied the full ramifications of Calvinism. Calvinism teaches irresistible grace; the grace of God calls out the elect for whom the blood atonement was made and doesn't call out anybody else, and if He did call anybody else out it would be a terrible and tragic mistake because there wasn't enough blood shed to take care of the non-elect. (That is the third point in Calvinism called limited atonement, which we have discussed.)

Paul also claimed that he gave people the new birth through the gospel. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:15 (there's nothing like a little Bible study to clear up the

mistakes of John Calvin), "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you..." not God or the Holy Spirit, "through the gospel." Now, aren't these strange things for a man to say who believed the work was all of God and who believed in "sovereign grace" and all this stuff Paul was supposed to believe in that he didn't believe in? Isn't this strange? And what is James saying when he says in James 5:20, "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death...." He "shall save a soul from death." Now, what do you make of these things? A Calvinist says, "Well, what about that passage over there...." Yeah, but you see, a Calvinist can never face scripture. Calvinists, like Campbellites and Church of Christ people and hyper-Dispensationalists, have what we call the hop- skip-and-jump-merry-go-round type of mind that keeps hopping from one verse to another without clearly facing a verse.

For example, when you begin to talk about these matters and about Paul being the instrument, the average hyperCalvinist will turn you immediately to 2 Timothy 2:10 and will read as follows: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake that they may also obtain salvation...." Now, isn't that rather stupid to take it like John Calvin took it? I didn't read what the verse said. I just read it the way every hardshell Baptist in this country has been teaching it for two hundred years. That isn't what the verse said, and if the verse said that, wouldn't it be a rather stupid verse? Imagine Paul going through all this suffering, enduring all these things so the elect could get saved.

Listen, child, in Calvin's system all the elect are going to be saved whether anybody endures anything or not. Wouldn't you say it was rather stupid to go through that much suffering to no point? Now, this is the problem the Calvinist has in facing a verse and reading a verse and, as we said before, the Campbellites, Calvinists and hyper-Dispensationalists all have the circular type of reasoning. They can't pinpoint a truth and deal with it. Their theology may be properly called a "jackrabbit theology" or "hop, skip and jump." Now, the verse said this: "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." The context goes further and says, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him...."

And there is a warning in the passage to "study to shew thyself approved unto God" right in the passage. And right in this passage about the "elect's sake" not merely getting saved but having eternal glory there is a warning about the Presbyterian Reform and hardshell Baptist preacher teaching Amillennialism--

verses 17 and 18. In verses 17 and 18 two fellows were turned over to the devil for teaching that the first resurrection was past because there is only a spiritual resurrection (Eph. 2:1-4). That is what John Calvin believed. John Calvin was not a Premillennialist. He was an Amillennialist as was J. Gresham Machen and Benjamin Warfield and as was Charles Haddon Spurgeon and Jonathan Edwards. Do you know what happened to Hymenaeus and Philetus for teaching the first resurrection was over because it was spiritual? At least one of them was turned over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. You say, "Where did you get that from? We got that from 1 Timothy 1:20, Hymenaeus. So, as we said before, Calvin was not a very careful student of the word of God.

The classic passage for irresistible grace and unconditional election is Romans 9; so, we will take a few minutes to briefly discuss this chapter, but only a very few minutes because, after all, those who know the word of God know that the calling and election does not take place until the person has received Jesus Christ. Sam Jones said, "A man can't get elected until he has got his hat in the ring. He has got to be nominated before he can be elected," which is a rather crude way of saying a great truth that Calvin couldn't understand. When you really give an oversimplification of a great truth such as Sam Jones gave, then all these fellows holler and roar and spin their wheels and have a fit, and yet their own statements are extremely oversimplified. I mean, the idea of bringing down the truth of the Bible to five points. Brother, you talk about an oversimplification.

We are reading this passage in the light of the so-called "unconditional election" and the so-called "irresistible grace." Romans 9:9-13, "For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." (That took place in time in Genesis.) "And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac;" (that took place in time after Gen. 15) ("For the children being not yet born," [that took place in Genesis after she conceived, not before Genesis 1] "neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.") It was already said, "It was said unto her...." That is, the prophecy was made ahead of time by the foreknowledge of God showing you clearly that, knowing what the boys would do, God elected one. Notice how the election was based on foreknowledge. "It was said unto her, The elder" (that's a prophecy) "shall serve the younger." That's a prophecy and it is a prophecy based on foreknowledge. Do you know why God chose Jacob? Verse 13, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." Did God love Jacob and hate Esau before they were

born? Nonsense. You never read one word about God loving Jacob and hating Esau until years and years and years after Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses were dead. Why did the Lord love Jacob? Because he had a regard for spiritual things. Why did He hate Esau? Because he sold his spiritual birthright. Did the Lord know they were going to do this? Of course He knew. Knowing it, what did He do? He prophesied to Rebecca and said, "The elder shall serve the younger." This is a clear case of election based on foreknowledge and has nothing to do with the good pleasure and arbitrary pleasure of God at all. So, Calvin is off again.

Continuing Romans 9:14, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." Why shouldn't God elect a fellow who is going to do right? Why not elect the man who receives Christ? You say, "That election doesn't refer to a man receiving Christ. Election refers to getting saved." You're crazy. Nobody in the Old Testament received Jesus Christ. Were they elected? Do you see the mess folks get into? Did you know that the Jews in the Tribulation are referred to as the "elect of God" in Matthew 24? And Calvin was such a Bible blockhead he thought that Matthew 24 was a reference to the body of Christ. Did you know that? Did you know that in Matthew 24:22 and 24 it says, "...for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened," and "...deceive the very elect"? And you have people right now today who have been fooling around with the philosophical, theological system of Calvin for so long they are now teaching that Christians go through the Tribulation. Do you know what those dumb thumps thought? They thought that every time you saw the word "elect" it had to refer to the body of Christ. Now, isn't that strange in view of the scripture? Isn't that a strange business? Did you ever stop to think about that word "elect," how it first referred to people who are not in Christ and will never be in Christ? Did you notice in Romans 11:5 and 7 when the Bible is speaking about the Old Testament Israelites it says, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace," and "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for," (talking about Old Testament unsaved Israel up to the time of Christ) "but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Why, the term "elect" originally in your Bible is a reference to the Old Testament saints. It is not a reference to the body of Christ. Neither Jacob nor Esau were in the body of Christ. Neither one was in Christ, neither one was circumcised, neither one was regenerated, and God did not "grant either one repentance."

Calvin was a little bit addled when it came to studying the word of God. Now,

we may say this about John Calvin. He was a great administrator and a great political theologian and a great philosophical exegete, but when we talk about believing the word of God and being true to the word of God we will say that he was right twenty percent of the time. We may follow him twenty percent of the time. We thank God that occasionally a good man like Jonathan Edwards or Charles Haddon Spurgeon had enough sense to confine his Calvinistic preaching to twenty percent of his sermons. If he had made it any more than that he would have made a terrible mistake and the Lord wouldn't have used him. He would have been a hyper-Calvinist. A hyper-Calvinist emphasizes all five points constantly.

Continuing Romans 9:15, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

This is probably the biggest stumbling block in the entire Calvinistic system. When John Calvin read this passage, being rather shallow in Bible study and being rather corrupted by his theological and philosophical studies, he read it this way: "For he saith to Moses, I will save whom I will save, and I will regenerate whom I will regenerate. So then it is not of a man that wills to receive Jesus Christ, nor of him that runs around in circles, but of God that saves a man by irresistible grace." Of course the verse had nothing to do with that.

Looking at the verse very carefully, a great deal more carefully than Berkhof or Machen or Warfield or any other Bible-rejecting Fundamentalist ever looked at it, we learn first of all that the reference was to Moses, who was not in the body of Christ, who was not regenerated, and who was not conformed to His image and who was not "chosen in Christ."

Next we notice the reference to Pharaoh (v. 17) where the Lord is talking about the judgments upon Pharaoh in Egypt in Exodus, the Old Testament. Isn't this some place for a fellow to start talking about a New Testament sinner receiving Jesus Christ? Doesn't it strike you as rather weird that a man would start in this place? What would you make of a man who got up and began to talk about the doctrines of salvation and how a man is saved and then pulled out as a prime proof text Moses dealing with Pharaoh? Doesn't it strike you as rather odd in view of the fact that when Moses dealt with Pharaoh, Genesis had not been written nor had 1 and 2 Samuel and Proverbs and Psalms; Christ had not come and had not died; and He had not been buried and had not risen from the dead; and there was no New Testament written? Doesn't it strike you as rather strange

that when a man goes to his proof text as a foundation text for his system, he goes to Moses dealing with Pharaoh in Exodus?

Rather hard to believe, isn't it? But that is where John started. As a matter of fact, Romans 9:16 and Romans 9:21-23 are the bedrock of the entire Calvinistic system.

As I said before, we are going to be much more careful in reading the Bible than the expositors such as Arthur W. Pink and Berkhof and Dabney and Kuiper and Hodge and Gill and the Puritan Press and the Pilgrim Press. Verse 15, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." This led Calvin to think that it was arbitrary free will without reference to anything, which, of course, we have already seen is a lie. In 1 Peter 1:2 and in Romans 8:29 predestination and election are both conditioned on foreknowledge, and right in the verse above is election conditioned on foreknowledge.

Romans 9:16, "So then it is not of him that willeth...." Willeth what? This is the kind of bog and mire that the Bible-rejecting Fundamentalist gets messed up in when he tries to make the Bible conform to what he has learned in theology and philosophy. There wasn't anything said there about Pharaoh not having free will. There was nothing said there about somebody willing to receive Jesus Christ. There was nothing in the passage about God willing salvation for the sinner. Do you know what you can find? You can find tracts up and down this country on TULIP published by these heretics that have actually taken this verse and tied it to Philippians and, by doing this, they have erected the monstrous non-Biblical structure that God wills salvation for the sinner because he can't will it himself. You would never believe the verse that is quoted to prove this blasphemous nonsense. The verse quoted is Philippians 2:13, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

You wouldn't believe it unless you read it, but by coupling Romans 9:16 with Philippians 2:13 these depraved, Bible-rejecting Fundamentalists and Conservatives and Calvinists have said that God works in the unsaved man to will for him because "it is not of him that willeth."

This amazing scripture abortion ranks with the theology of the Campbellite elders, the Roman Catholic priests and the followers of Cornelius Stamm (who make the body of Christ begin with Paul when the one man and the one new body and the middle wall of partition was broken down at Calvary), and it is done by the mangling and manipulation of scripture for private interpretation. Notice in Philippians 2:13, "For it is God which worketh in you..." And who is

the you? It is an unsaved man who can't receive Jesus Christ? My, my, my, look at verses 12 and 13, "Wherefore, my beloved...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you" (the beloved who are saved) "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." These fellows are trying to tell us that after a man is regenerated he still has no free will. This is the monstrous mess that the Calvinist gets into. Now, it is true that if you read the nonsense put out by Jonathan Edwards and Machen and Warfield and Berkhof and Dabney and Kuiper and Hodge and L. R. Shelton and Barnard and Gilpin and Ross that you won't see these glaring deficiencies in their system, but that is because they never stay with a verse long enough to deal with it.

For example, if you went to Philippians 2:12-13 there isn't a Calvinist I'm talking to who would discuss that verse ten minutes with you, and it ought to be discussed at least thirty minutes. I mean, after all, is there anybody dumb enough to think that God has always had His will in your life? Is it really God that "worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure"? Then why is there so much in your life even after you're regenerated that is not according to His good pleasure? You say, "Well, that's the...." Yeah, but don't run from the verse. The verse was used to prove that God in an unsaved man willed because the unsaved fellow couldn't will or receive Christ so God willed for him, but the verse had to do with God working in the life of a Christian. And, even if you apply it to a Christian it can't be an infallible doctrinal statement because God doesn't always have His will in your life and doesn't always have His good pleasure from us. You know it and I know it, and if you want to lie about it I'll talk to your wife or your children or, better still, your mother. Now, is anybody so full of nonsense as to think that God has always done His "good pleasure" in the life of a believer?

The Calvinistic system eventually is designed to justify sin in the life of a believer, especially a lazy believer who will not do what God told him to do or who, having done what God told him to do and not having gotten visible results, insists there must be some mistake and alters the theological system so he can justify his lack of results. Hardshell Baptist churches, as anyone knows, are made up of this kind of people. Some Primitive Baptists and hyper-Calvinists are Premillennial and only take part of Calvin while professing to be Calvinists. After all, John Calvin sprinkled babies. What could be any funnier than the Baptist Examiner or the Christian Baptist talking about being Calvinist when they don't believe in sprinkling babies or burning people at the stake, and they are Premillennial? Rather a weird follower of Calvin, wouldn't you say? Why

these people think they are "Calvinists" because they overemphasize five doctrines, and four of them aren't even Bible doctrines.

Coming back to Romans 9:16, "So then it is not of him that willeth...." That willeth to do what? Calvin never found what the what was. When a man is looking for a proof text to justify a lie he can never find the context. Did you ever notice that? Did you ever check these fellows writing these books on "verbal inspiration"? They never can quote the verse that precedes their text. Did you know that when they start quoting 2 Timothy 3:16, you can't find one book on the market that ever quoted 2 Timothy 3:15? Do you know why? Because every man who set out to write on verbal inspiration tried to go to 2 Timothy 3:16 to prove that the King James Bible was not inspired. So, he couldn't find the verse before it. Now, had Calvin had glasses he would have read Romans 9:16, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy...I will have compassion..." The context of verse 16 had nothing to do with an unsaved sinner receiving Jesus Christ by an act of free will. As we mentioned before, "free will" is a Bible statement and a Bible doctrine and a Bible truth (Ezra 7:13; 7:15; 7:16, Exod. 35:21; 35:5; and 35:29). You say, "Why did you use the Old Testament?" Because in the Old Testament none of them were born again and they were all dead in trespasses and sins and still had a free will. Why did you think we used it?

Romans 9:16, "So then it is not of him that willeth...." That willeth what? Verse 15--a man cannot by act of will make God have mercy on him or make God have compassion on him. If you want mercy from God and compassion from God you are going to have to come His way, not your way. What could be clearer than that in the text, if a man could read? You can't make up your mind on how to be saved. "All right, I am determined. I've decided by an act of will that God is going to have mercy and compassion upon me." You can't do it. It is of God. It is, verse 16, "...of God that sheweth mercy." With such a clear thing, how do you suppose Calvin could become so boggled down? How in the world could anybody get that screwed up in the word of God with a context of "have mercy" in verse 15 and with verse 16 closing with "mercy"? How could that man have ever thought that the verse denied the free will of man receiving Jesus Christ when the problem was not even under discussion? You say, "Well, at Calvary the Lord has mercy on a man and a man receives compassion at Calvary." Sure, that is the whole point. The point is, if you want God to have mercy and compassion upon you, you can't will it; you have to obey God's will. And God has determined He will have mercy and compassion on no man but a man who

receives His Son as his Saviour. What could be any clearer than that, unless you are going to the Bible to look for proof texts to prove something that is not so? Romans 9:17-18, "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Did you ever actually read Exodus to see what that was about? John Calvin didn't. He just took for granted that God hardened the non-elect and saved the elect and that was the end of it. A rather stupid way to do exegesis. Did you ever go back there in Exodus and notice in chapter 3, before God ever sent Moses down there, that He exhibited His foreknowledge by saying, "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go...."

There is not a case in the Bible where election was based on anything but foreknowledge.

There isn't a case of arbitrary election anywhere in the Book from cover to cover. That is not all. Did you notice that before God hardened Pharaoh's heart that Pharaoh hardened his own heart? Did you notice that? Why don't you go back and study the passages? "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will?" Now, when you apply that to the matter of salvation you get a first-rate mess. Any man has resisted the will of God who rejects Jesus Christ. "The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," 2 Peter 3:9. John says in 1 John 3:23, "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ...." A man says, "Who hath resisted his will?" Why, when you apply that to salvation, it is perfectly apparent.

Any man who has rejected Christ has rejected or resisted the will of God. The only way Calvin could get around that was to say that the blood was shed only for the elect; therefore, it was the "will of God" that the non-elect reject Christ. Therefore, the non-elect sinner who had no blood atonement rejected Christ and that was "the will of God." I don't care how you cook Calvin, it comes out tripe no matter what you do with it. You can say, "Oh, we don't really...." I know what you mean, you old liar. You mean that by a lot of baloney on special and convenient grace and common grace and superlapsarianism and intralapsarianism you have erected a fog, a web of words where it looks like you believe something you don't believe. We read you. What you mean is that if you discuss the junk you read in those books it would sound pretty high-class, wouldn't it?

You know, some of you people deeply resent me boiling everything down to simple language, don't you? Well, listen; One day Truth and Error went swimming together, and while they were down there in the old swimming hole Error stole Truth's clothes and ever since then Error has been parading around as Truth, while the Truth has been the naked Truth. Anything that is as hard to explain as the Calvinistic system would have to be a lie. Things that are true and honest and aboveboard are not that hard to explain. When you try to make a man obey the will of God by rejecting Jesus Christ, you are accusing God of sin.

Romans 9:20, "Nay but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" Right. You have no business to say that. You know what His will is. "The Lord is...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Continuing with verse 20, "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" The thing formed? Why, that had nothing to do with before Genesis 1. There wasn't any clay around to form things out of until after Genesis 1:1-4. There is no discussion here about the eternal decrees of God in eternity. It says, "Shall the thing formed...." you see the final mess that Calvin got into. He suddenly had all the non-elect formed before Genesis 1:1, and then he made anything that had to do with birth or life an eternal thing before Genesis 1:1 on the flimsy basis that foreknowledge meant predestination. In the Bible, predestination is conditioned on foreknowledge.

Verse 21, "Hath not the potter power over the clay...." There is no clay before Genesis 1:1. There is no potter shaping clay in Genesis 1:1. There is no potter forming and shaping clay in eternity. There is no clay around to form until Genesis 1:2. "Hath not the potter power over the clay; of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" What is the context? Verse 17, Pharaoh. The vessel is already there. The vessel was raised up for a purpose. Twenty-two, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Fitted to destruction? Make known his power and long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction? What fitted them to destruction? Make known his power and long-suffering, the Testament sense, what fitted a vessel to destruction or for wrath? John 3:36, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the WRATH of God abideth on him." Is that clear? Romans 9:22, "What if God, willing to shew his wrath...the vessels of wrath...." What are the vessels of wrath? The ones that do not believe on Jesus Christ, John 3:36.

This brings us right back where we started. This brings us back to the godless,

helling blasphemy taught by John Calvin that the unbeliever cannot believe because God made it impossible for him to believe because God fitted him for destruction before Genesis 1:1. The "decree of reprobation" is eternal according to all systematic theologians, whether you know that or not; and, therefore, the unsaved man cannot believe; therefore, the wrath of God abides on him for something for which he is unaccountable and irresponsible. I don't care where you stop with John Calvin you are going to wind up in the same place. You can justify it and say, "Ruckman's got a straw dummy. We don't really believe that. We don't really teach that," until you are red, white, black and blue. But the fact remains, in Calvin's system the ones who are elected to damnation couldn't be saved if they believed because there was no blood shed for them and they can't believe because God has to believe for them and God only believes or wills for the "elect."

That is the nonsense about the "sovereignty of God" and "sovereign grace," that is the irreverent, blasphemous tomfoolery taught by John Calvin and the Calvinists. We discount everything about them so far and put it in the wastebasket without a second thought. We have covered the first four points of TULIP. There is not a single one of them that is scriptural.

5. Perseverance of the Saints

We now come to the last point, the "perseverance of the saints," or some give it as "predestination." This time Calvin hit it right. The word predestination is a Bible term and, even though he got it wrong both times it occurred, at least he recognized that the truth was there. For example, the word "predestination" only occurs two times in your Bible and neither time is it a reference to an unsaved man. The word "predestination" occurs two times in your Bible and neither time is it a reference to a man getting saved. (One more time!) The word "predestination" occurs two times in your Bible and not a single time does it ever refer to the destination of an unsaved man before receiving Christ or the time of conversion of a saved man when he received Jesus Christ. That is, the term "predestination," as Calvin found it, he could not apply to the truth, so we may take the fifth point and throw it out also on the grounds that Calvin didn't know what he was talking about. The term "predestination" occurs one time in your Bible in Romans 8:29. Read it. It occurs the next time in Ephesians 1:5. Read it. Ephesians 1:5 and Romans 8:29. Notice in neither context is anybody talking about anybody getting saved. The verses where they occur in both contexts have no reference to an unsaved man receiving Christ, an unsaved man going to hell or the time of conversion of a saved man, one of the elect. Calvin simply didn't know what he was talking about.

We may say that back in the days of Martin Luther and Zwingli and Bucer, Calvin was a "precious shining light in his day" and gave a lot of light where it was needed and, thank God, he was anti-Catholic in some of his beliefs. That was his redeeming feature. He was anti-Catholic in some of what he believed. As far as his treatment of heretics was concerned and as far as his prophetic teachings were concerned, he was a Roman Catholic from the bottom of his feet to the top of his head. The term "predestination" only occurs in regard to a man who was already saved (Eph. 1:5), where when a man received Jesus Christ, his destination is to be adopted as a child of God (which Old Testament saints were not), and when he receives Jesus Christ he is predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ (which the Old Testament saints were not).

Conclusion

This completes our brief study of hyper-Calvinism. The hyper-Calvinist is a heretic, like the hyper-Dispensationalist or the Campbellite elder or the Roman Catholic priest or the Mormon or the Seventh-day Adventist. The fact that he has a little more scripture to quote and a little more biblical "proof" than some of these heretics means absolutely nothing in the light of the truth. In the light of the truth, the five points of Calvinism are a blank. Of the final point one can say that it is true. Predestination is a doctrine. It is true that the saints will "persevere" by virtue of the fact that they are in Christ and Christ makes intercession for them. They are "bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh." But certainly predestination has nothing to do with the Calvinistic doctrines of that subject as John Calvin taught them. As John Calvin taught the doctrine of predestination, he taught a lie. Predestination has nothing to do with when the unsaved man got saved or whether or not the unsaved man went to hell. It had to do with what happens to the born again believer after he has received Jesus Christ. Then his destination is fixed.

We appreciate the Huguenots who were a soul-winning, martyred people who believed the word of God and assimilated some of Calvin's teaching. We appreciate the great Scotch Presbyterians who preached the truth and loved the word of God and did a great work for God and assimilated much of Calvin's teaching. We appreciate the Puritans' standard of living and their love of discipline and separation and law and order, even though they assimilated some of Calvin's teaching. We appreciate Charles Haddon Spurgeon, a great preacher and a great soul winner whom God mightily used when he was not preaching Calvinistic doctrines. Anybody who has read the Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit realizes that Charles Haddon Spurgeon didn't waste one Sunday out of twenty preaching the five points of Calvinism. He professed to be a Calvinist and may have been a Calvinist, but he certainly had better sense than to preach it from the pulpit when he wanted results. If you take the sermons of Charles Haddon Spurgeon and lay them out and go through them and mark the ones that deal with the five points of Calvinism or even the sermons devoted entirely to one of the five points there will be less than one out of twenty. Charles Haddon Spurgeon had better sense than to follow John Calvin more than five percent of the time. And those of us who believe the word and preach the word have better sense than to follow him one percent of the time.

This study has been on TULIP. 1. Total depravity, supposedly justified by

Ephesians 2:1-4, which has nothing to do with the will, mentioned in Ezra 7:13; 7:15; 7:16, Exodus 35:5; 35:21; 35:29. And since total depravity does not affect responsibility (John 3:36, Isa. 45:19, Luke 17:1), we take TULIP and put it in the wastebasket as unscriptural, non-Biblical nonsense. Depravity may extend to every part of a man's nature, but a man's will is not a part of his nature, as you would think anybody would know after a while.

1. Unconditional election, supposedly justified by Ephesians 1:4 and Romans 9; disproved by 1 Peter 1:2 where it is plainly said to be conditioned on foreknowledge, as it is also mentioned in Romans 8:29.

2. Limited atonement, supposedly justified by John 10:11, Ephesians 5, and Christ giving his life as a ransom for many. This is clearly abrogated by the statement that He gave His life as a ransom for all, 1 Timothy 2:6; that God wants all men saved, 1 Timothy 2:4; that all should repent, 2 Peter 3:9, and mainly by the fact that the atonement was for unsaved, hell-bound, Christ-rejecting false prophets and teachers, 2 Peter 2:1, and for Christ-rejecting, non-elect Jews, Hebrews 10.

3. Irresistible grace, supposedly bolstered up by Acts 13:48 and Ephesians 2:1-4; clearly shown to be a boo-boo by Acts 7, Matthew 32, Matthew 12, Genesis 6 and Romans 9.

4. Predestination or perseverance (Eph. 1:5), clearly shown to be applicable only to a man who has already received the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nobody in the Old Testament was regenerated. Nobody in the Old Testament was "granted repentance." Nobody in the Old Testament was "chosen in Christ." Nobody in the Old Testament believed the New Testament gospel. Yet there are scores and scores of saved people throughout the Old Testament who by a free act of free will obtained salvation by obeying God. Therefore, the statement that a man has no free will because he has never been regenerated is just unutterable, inexpressible trash and should not be taught or mentioned in the same breath with the holy scriptures written and preserved by a holy God. Calvinism was an interesting doctrine in its day for philosophical speculators and theological exegetes, and it has a certain amount of interest today that, when applied, makes interesting discussion and subject matter for bull sessions among educated people. The high Calvinistic doctrine of TULIP, which was never assimilated by the practical soul winners who were Calvinists, furnished an interesting example of deep theological speculation for people who had nothing to do but sit around and talk and "hear or tell something new"; however, the soul winners who followed John Calvin never wasted a great deal of time with it.

We adopt the position of George Whitefield, who said, "A moderate Calvinism was and is and will always be the best doctrine for evangelism." A moderate Calvinism. What do we mean by moderate? We mean total depravity, with the exception that the will is a free agent. We mean unconditional election, with the qualification that it is conditioned on foreknowledge. We mean Calvinism, with the exception that limited atonement is a bunch of godless, lying trash and shouldn't ever be preached or taught anywhere. And irresistible grace is a horse laugh, with the exception that God must be gracious toward man and deal with him. Finally, perseverance of the saints; we grant this is so after the man has been born again. That is what is called a moderate Calvinism.

We do not subscribe to the complete teaching of Calvin's total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement or irresistible grace. We have nothing to do with his doctrine of baby sprinkling. We have nothing to do with his doctrine of Amillennialism. And we absolutely abhor and despise and hold as an abomination the teaching of John Calvin and the Puritans that the body of Christ was to set up a political theocracy to be run as a state government. On those lines we completely disagree with Calvin, as did all the Baptists and Anabaptists of his day. We take our side with the Baptists of Calvin's day who were persecuted by Calvin and Zwingli for not subscribing to a church-state, baby-sprinkling religion.

In short, we are not "Calvinists." We are proud not to be Calvinists. And God forbid we should ever be called "Calvinists." We are Bible-believing Christians, or, if you please, Bible-believing Baptists if you want to know what kind of Christian. And if you want to know what kind of Baptists, we are not Southern Baptists or Northern Baptists. We are Bible-believing Baptists. We are what the Baptist Examiner professes to be. We are what the hard shells profess to be and are not. In short, we are people who believe the Book from cover to cover. And where the teaching of Machen, Dabney, Kuiper, Gill, Tolley, the Puritans, Warfield, Berkhof and Arthur W. Pink contradict the word of God, we dispose of them immediately, cheerfully, with love and best wishes. And this is the position that any Bible-believer should take. Let God be true, but every man a liar. And where the man crosses the scripture, cross him. Or, to quote a great soul-winning evangelist who didn't preach any of TULIP, "Where the scholars say one thing and the Bible says another, the scholars can go plumb to the devil." The man who made that statement led more than a million people to Jesus Christ. He was Billy Sunday, and alongside him we don't figure John Calvin to be in the running.

May the Lord bless you and we hope this file has been edifying and we hope it will exhort and rebuke the brethren as well as educate and edify and inspire; we trust that those who read it will understand that all scripture is profitable, not only for doctrine but for reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. May the Lord bless you and good day.